THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) Only R and D studies are in progress presently.

(b) In view of (a) above question does not arise.

Procedure for awarding dealership

1460. SHRI R. a GAVAI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering for continuing with the old procedure for awarding petrol pumps and LPG agencies;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether the public sector oil companies have requested to continue the practice on dealership as before APM; and

(e) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) to (e) In order to privide commercial freedom to the Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs), in the wake of the dismantling of the Administered Pricing Mechanism with effect from 1.4.2002, the Government has since dissolved the Dealer Selection Boards. The selection of dealers/distributors will now be made by the OMCs themselves in accordance with a new common procedure.

Entry of private companies in retail sector

1461. DR. VIJAY MALLYA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Ministry of PNG has granted permission to private companies to sell petroleum products through retail outlets;

(b) if so, the names of these companies and the details of the agreement thereof; and

(c) whether social obligations in the allotment of retail outlets have been included in the agreement and if so, the details thereof?